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MAR 28

LAMB - FROM PASTURE TO PLATE

A radio conversation between Miss Ruth Van Deman, Bureau of Home Economics, Mr. K. F. Warner, Bureau of Animal Industry, and Mr. Wallace Kadderly, Office of Information, Broadcast Thursday, March 23, 1939, in the Department of Agriculture period of the National Farm and Home program, by the National Broadcasting Company and a network of 93 associate radio stations

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ANNOUNCER:

Here we are in your Nation's Capital on a fine March day, with the sun shining brightly and the wind blowing--just enough---a breeze that seems to--well--in the sunshine, caress you; but in the shade nips you mildly. But it's not for me to talk about the weather. I'm going to turn the microphone right over to Wallace Kadderly, Chief of the Department of Agriculture's radio service. He has something extra special waiting for you today.

WALLACE KADDERLY:

Bill, you're quite right. We do have something extra on hand here today.

I know it's always dangerous to claim a first. But I think I'm quite safe in saying that this is the first time there's been a hot roast leg of lamb on this table by this microphone. Ruth Van Deman of our Bureau of Home Economics has had a hand in this.

But, Ruth, I haven't figured yet just how you do it---how you get food up here hot like this, right out of the oven - - - - -

RUTH VAN DEMAN:

There's nothing very difficult about that---when you have good friends in the laboratory to time the cooking, and good taxicabs on call. Mr. Warner here can bear me out on that.

KADDERLY:

Well, Mr. Warner---K. F. Warner from the Bureau of Animal Industry - - Well, Mr. Warner, before you whet your knife and show us how an animal husbandman carves a leg of lamb---and, Ruth, before you tell us how a home economics expert roasts lamb to make it brown and juicy looking like this, let's take a look at the research back of this. This must be one of the projects planned to help the producer and the consumer.

WARNER:

It is---exactly like that. This leg of lamb here is a very good example of some of our breeding and feeding work.

KADDERLY:

What breed was this one?

(over)

WARNER:

This is Southdale---a cross between the Corriedale and the Southdown.

KADDERLY:

The Southdown---that's an English breed.

WARNER:

Yes, the Southdown's an extreme mutton type. We crossed that with the Corriedale for wool. What we're trying to get is an improved farm type--- with good mutton and good wool characteristics.

KADDERLY:

Then this isn't a range lamb.

WARNER:

No, this lamb was born on a Government farm in Middlebury, Vermont. It came down with a bunch of others last October to the research center at Beltsville, Maryland. It's been on a feeding test since then.

KADDERLY:

It's certainly been well fed. It's good and fat.

WARNER:

It's had a heavy soybean ration---soybeans and alfalfa hay---nothing else.

KADDERLY:

I see. You're tieing in with some of the soil improvement work, to make better use of legumes.

WARNER:

Exactly. With hogs, soybeans and peanuts sometimes are not used so happily because of the soft fat in the pork. But with lambs, we find a heavy soybean ration does not produce soft lamb fat.

VAN DEMAN:

Some people might like lamb fat better if it were softer.

WARNER:

Especially when it comes to washing dishes.

VAN DEMAN:

Oh, you know about that.

KADDERLY:

What bothers me is to have hot roast lamb or lamb chops served on a cold plate.

VAN DEMAN:

That's one of the things that never should be. Lamb fat begins to harden the minute it strikes anything cold.

WARNER:

Well, we don't want this leg of lamb to get cold before we carve it. But there's just one point about storage I'd like to bring out. We find that lamb is more tender if it's held in the chill room at about 34 to 36 degrees, for anywhere from seven to ten days after dressing.

VAN DEMAN:

This out was more than chilled though, it was frozen.

WARNER:

Hard frozen. That's right. In a way this shows the kind of meat a farm family might have with a freezer locker. This particular piece was frozen and stored at zero. Then it was allowed to thaw out slowly in the chill room.

VAN DEMAN:

When it came to Lucy Alexander to cook it was just like any other piece of fresh chilled meat.

WARNER:

Yes, if frozen meat is properly handled there's no unusual drip or leakage from it. Miss Alexander roasted it just like all the others, didn't she?

VAN DEMAN:

I think so. This was her 3740th.

KADDERLY:

3740th what? Leg of lamb?

VAN DEMAN:

Yes, leg of lamb. Believe it or not.

KADDERLY:

The count's gone up about a thousand or so since I heard it last.

WARNER:

Well, of course this research on lamb's been running for nearly 15 years now---in cooperation with 13 of the State experiment stations.

KADDERLY:

That's covering the experiments in breeding, and feeding, and storage, and everything else.

WARNER:

Yes.

VAN DEMAN:

I hope nobody thinks we had to cook all those legs of lamb to find out the best way to roast one at home. That was just our part of this big cooperative project.



KADDERLY:

But you people have developed some new theories about cooking meat.

VAN DEMAN:

Maybe helped put more science into it. Let's put it that way. This leg of lamb, for instance. It's a tender cut with a good covering of fat. We find that the way to keep the most juice in meat of this kind is to put it on a rack in an open pan and have the oven temperature moderate.

KADDERLY:

What do you mean moderate?

VAN DEMAN:

About 325 to 350 degrees if you have a wood or coal range or any kind of a stove in which you can't change the oven temperature quickly. Sometimes with a gas range people prefer to start with the oven about 450 to 500, and sear the roast for 20 minutes or so. Then the heat should be turned down---way down---so the roast cooks at about 300 for most of the time.

WARNER:

What do you say we cut into this lamb leg and see how well this no-lid, no-water, moderate-oven roasting keeps the juice in the meat.

KADDERLY:

Excellent idea. Bill and I want to see how a professional carves a leg of lamb.

WARNER:

Well, Miss Van Doman, I'm glad you've given me a good big platter here. That's my pet peeve as a carver---a small platter---a platter no bigger than the roast. And I might add as minor peeves, water glasses, and pickle dishes, and all sorts of do-dabs that get in the way.

KADDERLY:

I see you have the end of the leg bone to your right.

WARNER:

Yes, and I stick my fork into the other end near the hip joint. That gives me a good anchorage. Then I turn the roast on edge---this way. That brings this thickest part of the lean---the cushion as some people call it---on top. Then starting here, near the shank end, I begin to slice - - - -

ANNOUNCER:

You cut straight down to the bone.

WARNER:

That's right. In parallel slices, working up the leg toward the carving fork.

KADDERLY:

That's across the grain of the meat.

WARNER:

At right angles to it, yes. If you slice lamb with the grain it isn't so tender.

KADDERLY:

That goes for any meat.

VAN DEMAN:

You get the long stringy fibers when you go lengthwise.

ANNOUNCER:

You don't seem to put much pressure on your knife.

WARNER:

Just a light pressure, that's all. And a long even stroke---as long as your knife permits.

KADDERLY:

Your knife's good and sharp, I see.

WARNER:

My knife's always sharp when I carve. I think it's an insult to a good roast to tear it apart with a dull knife. I know a man who always wisecracks at his wife about his carving knife. His motto is---get a good carving knife. Sharpen it. And hide it from the women---so they won't use it for a can opener.

VAN DEMAN:

Careful, there, careful. I've seen too many men hack up a roast even when the knife was sharp.

KADDERLY:

All too true---I fear.

WARNER:

There---it's all sliced.

ANNOUNCER:

That I'm waiting to see is how you get those slices loose from the bone.

WARNER:

Oh, that's easy. Just run the knife this way---close to the bone---and you cut them all loose.

KADDERLY:

Eight fine slices, ready to serve. Very neat.

WARNER:

I hope you're noting this meat is full of juice.

VAN DEMAN:

Even though it's cooked well done. That seems to be the way most people like their lamb roasted---quite well done.

ANNOUNCER:

Say, this is good eating.

WARNER:

Flavor all right?

ANNOUNCER:

Delicious.

KADDERLY:

We're glad it suits you, Bill. You go right ahead and be chairman of the board of tasters.

Ruth, I want to check with you about that leaflet of yours---"Lamb as You Like It". That still on the free list?

VAN DEMAN:

Yes, I checked the supply yesterday.

KADDERLY:

As I remember it, that has all the modern ideas about cooking lamb worked down into recipes.

VAN DEMAN:

Yes, it has recipes and directions for roasting leg of lamb---and broiling chops---and stuffing and roasting shoulder, and some of the other cheaper cuts.

WARNER:

One fine thing about lamb is, all the cuts are tender. Lamb is a young animal.

VAN DEMAN:

Mr. Warner, I think we'll have to ask you to come back again sometime and tell us about your smart way of boning shoulder of lamb.

WARNER:

Just name the time, Miss Van Deman. I'll be very glad to come.

KADDERLY:

Well, we certainly appreciate this demonstration you've given us today. Thank you Ruth Van Deman and K. F. Warner. (Ad lib -- offer of lamb leaflet)

VAN DEMAN:

Wallace, before I leave the microphone may I say just a word about our broadcast last Thursday on the cotton hosiery?

KADDERLY:

Certainly, Ruth.

VAN DEMAN:

I want to thank all our listeners who wrote us so promptly. We've had over 500 letters from women, and some from men. It seems there's a public demand for good cotton stockings. And thanks to all these letters you've written us, Miss O'Brien can go to the manufacturers now with more confidence.